

Chapter 2
Allegory of Divine Providence
Pietro da Cortona
Divine Providence Reflections

In this assignment, students will explore the meaning of divine providence and how God acts in their lives. They will read three saint quotations on the meaning of divine providence and then write their responses to three reflection questions. You may wish to have the students share their responses with seat partner or as part of a large group discussion.

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“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread,[a] or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him.”

Mt 7:7-11

When you look around at the world today, it can be difficult to see God’s plan. But God promises us that as an earthly father knows how to give good gifts to his children, how much more will our Father in Heaven know our needs and provide for them. This is what we call *divine providence*.

Divine providence can seem confusing when what is really and truly good for us, doesn’t always *feel* good. Sometimes, the good things God gives us are medicinal. Medicine can be unpleasant at the moment, but it is always for our good. In a similar way God sends us challenges that, if we accept them despite their unpleasantness, will help us in our journey to eternal life.

Read the following quotations about divine providence from three saints. Select one quotation that resonates with you the most. Then answer the reflection questions as they relate to the quote you selected. When you have completed your reflection- you may be asked to share what you wrote with someone sitting near to you.

“Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day.”

St. Francis de Sales

“God will never permit anything to happen to us that is not for our greater good.”

St. Padre Pio

“Everything comes from love, all is ordained for the salvation of man, God does nothing without this goal in mind.”

St. Catherine of Siena

Complete the following for your chosen quotation.

1. Restate the quotation into your own words.
2. What does this quotation teach you about divine providence?
3. What makes divine providence difficult to trust in and practice today?